

FREDERICK COUNTY HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
September 30, 2014

Minutes

I. The September 30, 2014 meeting of the Frederick County Human Relations Commission was called to order at 7:00 pm in the 3rd floor conference room at Winchester Hall, 12 E. Church Street, Frederick, Maryland by Chair Angela Spencer.

An invitation was given to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. The following members were present at the meeting: Angela Spencer, Tonya Amedon, Jack A. Thomas, David P. Kaye, Melissa Meath, Felicia Turner, Annette Breiling, Lisa Clark, Oladimeji Ibraheem, Irene Packer-Halsey, Georgia Anne McCauley, and Francisco Alves. Liaisons present were Kathleen Hartsock and Donna Kuzemchak.

The following members were absent: Adeyemi Adeoye, Kavonte Duckett and Mari Lee.

The following guests were present: Anastasia Rosen Jones, Maureen Connors and Christine Ferguson.

III. Upon motion, the August 26, 2014 minutes were unanimously approved with a correction noted on the last page regarding the time of the upcoming Human Trafficking program.

IV. Comments from the public

Anastasia Rosen-Jones discussed some of the upcoming activities planned by her organizations, the Small "Zones of Peace" Project of New Horizons Support Network, Inc.

Maureen Connors of the Frederick Center spoke about that organization's ongoing efforts on behalf of Frederick's LGBTQ community, and offered to coordinate with the HRC on training.

V. Officers Reports

a) Executive Committee

Angela Spencer reported that FPD Chief Ledwell attended the recent HRC Executive Committee meeting, at which he received thanks and congratulations on his efforts to promote harmony and justice in Frederick.

Angela Spencer encouraged all HRC members to familiarize themselves with the HRC's vision and mission statements, in order to better explain to others what the HRC is and what its members do.

Angela Spencer said that over the next two months she intends to meet with each of the HRC's three committees, to make preparations for the annual Strategic Plan Retreat, perhaps in January 2015. Members were asked to carefully review the ideas contained in the summary that was recently distributed. Chairs of these committees were asked to provide notice of their meetings so this could be accomplished.

Angela Spencer noted that while the HRC has many activities underway in Frederick, the goal should be to work more closely with some of the other cities in the county, such as Thurmont and Brunswick.

Angela Spencer said that the HRC's Twitter account is active and was used during the recent In the Street event.

Angela Spencer reported that the HRC website has been moved to the “Boards and Commissions” section of the main Frederick County website, as the HRC requested.

Angela Spencer reminded the three committee chairs that minutes of their committee minutes need to be prepared in order to show what is being discussed and accomplished.

Angela Spencer asked the members to consider whether to hold a holiday gathering or other event, possibly with a theme of team building. Options included socializing as well as dinner.

b) Treasurer’s Report

It was reported that available funds are \$4, 832.11.

c) NAC Updates

HRC members were encouraged to become more involved in NACs. There was discussion about ways that the HRC could better publicize itself in the community. One option was to place informational door-hangers at homes when they are bought and new owners move in. FPD Captain Jason Keckler was identified as the member of the command staff that will work most closely with the NACs.

VI. Committee Reports

a) Community Relations Committee

Lisa Clark reported that on the final walk-through for the upcoming Naturalization Ceremony at Linganore High School on October 11. Upon motion, it was unanimously approved that up to \$150.00 could be expended on refreshments. Donna Kuzemchak offered to get a proclamation honoring this event from the Mayor and Board of Aldermen of the City of Frederick.

The HRC Awards Banquet has been scheduled for April 13, 2015 at Dutch’s Daughter, and this has been confirmed with the restaurant.

b) Government Relations Committee

The HRC Legislative Luncheon has been scheduled for December 3, 2014 at the Bernard Brown Community Center. There was discussion about combining this event with Human Rights Day which is celebrated just a week later. Discussion was held about the focus of the Legislative Luncheon. One option discussed was to consider forming some kind of human trafficking coalition for Frederick County. Irene Packer-Halsey suggested that representatives of the Asian and Hispanic communities be invited to participate in the planning for this event.

There was discussion about the Fairness for All Marylanders Act (Senate Bill 212), which takes effect on October 1. Donna Kuzemchak and others suggested that continuing education about the provisions of this law will be very important as it is implemented.

c) Internal Relations Committee

David Kaye reported that the date of the planned Fair Housing Conference in 2015 is to be determined. Planning and coordination are still underway between the HRC, the city’s Fair Housing Commission and the Frederick County Association of Realtors.

d) Pangea Festival Committee

Planning is still underway for this event.

VII. HRD Director’s Report

Miles Ward discussed some of the components of the Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014, and explained how it would expand existing state law in Maryland that prohibits discrimination of many various types in housing, employment and public accommodations, and how the remedies available under these laws can be enforced.

VIII. Announcements

Angela Spencer encouraged all HRC members to wear their badges and polo shirts at public events that the HRC sponsors or participates in.

Discussion was held about possibly publishing an HRC newsletter. Angela Spencer said that the Executive Committee would discuss moving forward on this. David Kaye suggested that using Facebook and Twitter effectively would publicize more information more quickly than printing and distributing a newsletter. Tonya Amedon noted that some people are not on Facebook or Twitter.

Angela Spencer asked HRC members to volunteer to help and serve on November 16 at 5:00 pm at the Community Action Agency Soup Kitchen. An interfaith prayer walk will take place following, as part of a day of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness activities.

All HRC members were encouraged to attend the upcoming Human Trafficking symposium at Winchester Hall. This event is presented by the Frederick County Commission for Women, and cosponsored by the HRC. CFW Chair Christine Ferguson spoke about this upcoming event and thanked the HRC for its support and contributions.

Donna Kuzemchak reported that the March on Frederick was an outstanding success, with participation by many people and community groups. She suggested that the HRC consider starting a civil rights tour in Frederick that would highlight the many places, individuals and groups that have contributed to civil rights and human rights in our community.

Irene Packer-Halsey described her participation in the public forum at Hood College that took place during the weekend of the March on Frederick.

Kathleen Hartsock reported that the number of homeless students in the county's public schools this year appears to be increasing significantly.

IX. Upon conclusion of business and discussion the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Miles Ward of the Human Relations Department.

OCTOBER 2014 HRC MEETING

The next monthly meeting of the HRC will take place on Tuesday, October 29, 2014, at 7:00 p.m., at Winchester Hall, 12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD., in the 3rd floor conference room.

The public is always invited to attend HRC monthly meetings. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Miles Ward, Frederick County Human Relations Department at (301) 600-1110, or dial 711 for Maryland Relay Services to make arrangements, no later than three (3) working days prior to the meeting.

